# Field/Trip Report

**Name/s of reporter/s: Aberra Adie and Kindu Mekonnen**

**Name/s of traveler/s**: Kindu Mekonnen, Aberra Adie and Zebene Worku (Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy)

**Dates and place of travel: 9-10 Jan 2014** – Lemo Africa RISING Site

**Purpose/objective of the travel:**

1. Quick analysis of water recharging capacity of the shallow wells of sample farms to decide on crops to be irrigated
2. To talk to farmers about their plans of irrigated crops and if they are willing to include livestock fodder
3. To assess if there are local practices in the use of irrigation and forage development in the area to help experience sharing

**Key people contacted (contact details):**

1. Ato Tamirat, Lemo Woreda Office of Agriculture crop expert
2. Ato WoldeMariam Biramo, Lemo Woreda Office of Agriculture -Livestock office process owner
3. Ato Workneh, Africa RISING- site coordinator at Lemo
4. Farmers from Jawe and Upper Gana Kebeles

**Discussion/observation/insights:**

1. **Analysis of water recharging potential of the shallow wells of the farmers issued treadle and hip pumps**

Ato Zebene from the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy took sample measurements which guide the estimation of water potential in the shallow wells of 7 farmers both from Jawe and Upper Gana. While this is a quick assessment, Ato Zebene suggests a detail analysis using some tools which he has in his department. He will give us the report of the quick assessment and proposal for the detailed analysis by the end of this week.

1. **Discussion with farmers about the plans for irrigated crops including fodder**

We discussed with 4 farmers in Upper Gana and 3 farmers in Jawe about their plans of the irrigated crops. All of them said that they want to grow vegetables for home consumption and markets if possible. When asked if they want to include some forages to feed to few sheep which could be ready for Ester holiday, they all were positive and expressed their intention to increase their household income by possible profits from sheep fattening. Some farmers mentioned that they can buy the sheep by their own if they are provided with the forage planting materials and technical support. Some of these farmers have some patches of forages already at their back-yards just for demonstration and they want to plant them strategically to be fed to livestock and benefit from them. The 7 farmers visited are with the shallow wells with better or sustainable water (according to their experiences) and what can be seen physically and they are interested to grow forage along with vegetables. We also saw that most of them are already digging land to prepare the seed beds for planting. The government irrigation campaign is also pushing the farmers to grow some crops during this dry season. We also heard that the pumps distributed to the 18 farmers in Jawe and Upper Gana have been reported in the woreda and Zonal offices as a complementary input to the government’s initiative.

1. **Local practices in the use of irrigation and forage development in the area to help experience sharing**
   1. **Irrigation practices**

Workineh, the Lemo Africa RISING site coordinator suggested that we visit the irrigation experiences with farmers in Kambata, a neighboring Zone to Hadiya. We visited farmers in Karakicho kebele of Hangacha zone which is about 20-25 kms from Hosana (but belongs to Kambata zone) who use the rope and washer pumps to irrigate up to half a hectare of crop fields and they testify that their wells are always full throughout the year. These farmers already have experiences with irrigated crops and when they were asked if they want to grow forages for feeding their animals for markets, they responded that they are very much interested to grow forages in association with their other crops and fatten sheep for holiday markets. Workneh (the current Africa RISING Lemo site coordinator), who used to work for the irrigation project and Adise, the DA told us that a total of 580 units of the rope and washer pump have been distributed in the 11 out of the 19 Kebeles in Hangacha woreda during 2010 – 2013 through Omo Micro financing credit facilitation. We feel it is good to have some 6 farmers from this village as well to try the fodder production by irrigation in order to have comparative information between the different water pulling systems and different woredas.

* 1. **Forage practices**

We met Ato Woldemariam Bramo, Lemo Woreda Agriculture Office livestock process owner and explained him about the AR activities in the woreda to date. We also briefed him the intention to pilot on irrigated fodder development with farmers in Jawe and Upper Gana kebeles extending the research to wider farmer coverage in the due course. We then asked if there are any forage development initiatives in the woreda. Ato Woldemariam’s brief about the forage development in the woreda was the following:

Forage development started during the 4th Livestock Development Project in the 1980s with seed purchase-back from farmers who grew Vetch and Alfalfa in their farms. The initiative was to facilitate faster and wider adoption of forages varieties. Another project which introduced more varieties of forages in to the system was the National Livestock Development Project which introduced Rhodes grass, Tree Lucerne, Sesbania, Leucaena in addition to Vetch and Alfalfa. As time passed, a number of species including Fodder beets, Desmodium, Panicum grass, Phalaris, Setaria have been brought in to the system through the government extension system. However, due to knowledge gap in the area of utilization of the forages, the initiatives did not beyond being just demonstration plots. Currently, there are some species like Alfalfa, Fodder beets, Desmodium, Desho grass and others at FTC level and back-yards of few farmers. Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (**VOCA** ) project also has some forage projects in the woreda using some of the introduced forage species. People want to grow Oats for livestock feed but they that its seeds get mixed with that of wheat. None of the upper mentioned initiatives attempted irrigated fodder production alternatives.

**Farmers selected for irrigated fodder development from Lemo (Jawe and Upper Gana)**

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| **Ser.**  **No.** | **Farmer’s name** | **Kebele** |
| 1 | Tademe Kobe | **Upper Gana** |
| 2 | Eshetu Alaro | Upper Gana |
| 3 | Workneh Sode | Upper Gana |
| 4 | Workneh Kobe | Upper Gana |
| 5 | Adinew Ayele | **Jawe** |
| 6 | Arega Helalo | Jawe |
| 7 | Birhanu Tirkaso | Jawe |

**Key decisions and outcome/s:**

1. Seven farmers from Lemo (Jawe and Upper Gana) and potentially 6 farmers from Hangacha (Karakicho) will participate in the irrigated forage development and sheep fattening project
2. The planning and other activities need to be done urgently as the time for planting/establishing of the forages is short

**A way forward/ recommendations/suggestions (if any ):** Key suggestions that came out from the discussion include the following:

**The way forward**

The following activities are envisioned in the short term of the project.

**Schedule:**

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| **Ser.**  **No.** | **Activity** | **Responsibility** | **Timeline** |
| 1 | Discussion with Areka/Worabe research centers for possible partnership in the irrigated fodder research and joint research design | Kindu, Aberra | 27-31 Jan |
| 2 | Visit Kambata zonal BoA for possible engagement with Hangacha farmers | Workneh | 27-31 Jan |
| 3 | Seek the experience of VOCA in Lemo | Aberra | 27-31 Jan |
| 4 | Acquisition of forage seeds/seedlings | Aberra | 27-31 Jan |
| 5 | Focused group discussion with farmers, DAs and woreda experts regarding the fodder development and subsequent sheep fattening program | Kindu, Aberra, Workneh, Areka/Worabe | 27-31 Jan |
| 6 | Detailed Analysis of water potential | Kindu, Aberra, Zebene | 27-31 Jan |
| 7 | Training to farmers and DAs about the establishment, and utilization of the selected forages to be followed by planting plan | Aberra, Areka/Worabe/Lemo woreda Livestock office | 10-14 Feb |
| 8 | Planting of the forages | Lemo Woreda Livestock Office/Aberra/Workneh | 17-21 Feb |
| 9 | Experience sharing b/n Lemo and Hangacha farmers | Workneh | 10-14 Feb |
| 10 | Develop modalities of sheep acquisition | Kindu, Aberra, Workneh | Until Mid-March |

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| **Case story:** *Was there anything that struck you as really interesting during the trip? If so, you are encouraged to briefly describe it here (with pictures if possible) so that we can share these insights with the rest of the Africa RISING team and beyond.*  It is interesting to learn that about 580 pumps (Photo 1) have been distributed by Food for Hungry International (FHI) project in 11 kebeles at Hangacha woreda to aid irrigated high value crop production.  H:\KMekonnen (after ILRI)\Africa rising\Africa rising 2\ILSSI project\Photo\Small irrigation assesment Lemo 8-10 an 2013\Rope and washer pump distributed for farmers at Angecha woreda, Kembata zone.JPG  Photo 1. Rope and washer pump distributed for farmers at Angecha woreda, Kembata zone |